



Legislative Bulletin.....March 2, 2004

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Summary of the Bills Under Consideration Today:

Total Number of New Government Programs: 0

Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: 6

Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: 0

*Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: \$10.291 billion over five years**

Total Amount of Revenue Reductions: 0

Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: \$304 million over five years

Total Change in Mandatory Spending: 0

*Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: -\$258 million over five years**

Total New State & Local Government Mandates: 0

Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: 2

Total New Private Sector Mandates: 0

Year to Date Prior to Today’s Bills: 5

*Not including the costs contained in H.R. 3783, the Surface Transportation Extension Act, which passed the House on 2/11/04. A cost estimate remains unavailable.

H.Res. 439—Honoring the life and career of the late Willie Shoemaker (Reyes)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, March 2nd, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Res. 439 resolves that the House:

- (1) honors the life and legendary career in horse racing of Willie Shoemaker; and
- (2) expresses condolences on the passing of Willie Shoemaker to his family and friends.

Additional Background: According to the resolution, jockey Willie Shoemaker won his first race at the age of 18 and had compiled 8,833 victories by the time he retired in 1990. Over his career, he won four Kentucky Derbies, five Belmont Stakes, and three Preakness Stakes. He is a member of thoroughbred racing's Hall of Fame and the Texas Horse Racing Hall of Fame.

Shoemaker died on October 13, 2003, at the age of 72.

Committee Action: H.Res. 439 was referred to the Committee on Government Reform on November 10, 2003, and favorably reported by unanimous consent on February 12, 2004.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

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H.R. 3769—Ben Atchley Post Office Building Designation Act (Duncan)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, March 2nd, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 3769 would designate the United States Postal Service facility located at 137 East Young High Pike in Knoxville, Tennessee, as the “Ben Atchley Post Office Building.”

Additional Background: Ben Atchley currently serves as the Republican Leader in the Tennessee State Senate. He recently announced his retirement after 30 years of public service.

Committee Action: H.R. 3769 was referred to the Committee on Government Reform on February 4, 2004, and favorably reported by unanimous consent on February 12th.

Cost to Taxpayers: The only costs associated with a post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: Though no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to “establish Post Offices and post Roads.”

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H.Res. 530 — Resolution urging the appropriate representative of the United States to the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to introduce a resolution calling upon the Government of the People’s Republic of China to end its human rights violations in China (Smith of New Jersey)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, March 2, 2004, under suspension of the rules.

Note: In the 107th Congress, the House passed a similar resolution, H.Res. 56, by a vote of 406-6, with 6 voting present. See <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2001/roll078.xml>

Summary: H.Res. 530, as reported, urges the U.S. delegation to the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to introduce a resolution calling upon the Government of the People’s Republic of China to end its human rights violations in China. The resolution has 40 findings regarding various human rights and religious rights abuses by the People’s Republic of China and includes five senses of Congress, including that:

- “at the 60th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland, ... the United States should introduce a resolution calling upon the People’s Republic of China to end its human rights violations in China and meet internationally recognized standards for human rights;
- “United States Government officials and officials from other governments should continue to speak out in international forums and elsewhere against Chinese repression of religious and political freedom.” ...

The resolution also declares that, “Congress urges the Government of the People’s Republic of China”

- “to take the necessary measures to stop the persecution of all religious practitioners and to safeguard fundamental human rights;
- “to stop the forced return of North Korean refugees, to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees access to North Koreans inside China, and to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to develop a viable solution to the humanitarian crisis involving North Korean refugees;
- “to end its coercive one-child per family policy and ensure that no national, provincial, or local government officials subject women to forced abortions or sterilizations;
- “to immediately hold an open and transparent investigation into the 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, to release all the prisoners held in connection with that event, and to pay compensation to the families who lost their loved ones;
- “to release from detention all prisoners of conscience, persons held because of their religious activities, and persons of humanitarian concern;
- “to release the 11th Panchen Lama identified by Dalai Lama and allow him to undertake his rightful role;
- “to allow the Chinese people to practice freely and openly their religious beliefs;
- “to adhere to the provisions and guidelines of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the 1951 Convention Relating to Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; and
- “to allow, immediately and without restrictions, visits to China by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Religious Intolerance and Torture, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.”

Additional Information: According to the Resolution’s findings, in December of 2002, the Government of China agreed to invite U.S. and international religious freedom entities to China without conditions, which signaled “a good faith commitment on the part of Chinese officials to improve human rights practice in China.” It was, in part, due to these commitments that the U.S. did not introduce a resolution on China in the 59th Session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. The Chinese subsequently conditioned the visitation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, and two different trips were cancelled because of such conditions. None of the other entities have been invited to China.

Committee Action: The resolution was introduced on February 24, 2004, and referred to the House International Relations. The Committee considered the bill and ordered it to be reported to the full House by on February 25, 2004, by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution has no cost.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

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H.Res. 526—Expressing the sympathy of the House of Representatives for the victims of the devastating earthquake that occurred on December 26, 2003, in Bam, Iran (Ney)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, March 2nd, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Res. 526 would resolve that the House:

- “expresses its heartfelt sympathy for the victims of the earthquake that occurred on December 26, 2003, in Bam, Iran, and their loved ones;
- “expresses its heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the courageous work of the United States and international aid personnel saving lives in Iran; and
- “welcomes the President's decision to issue a general license for donations to nongovernmental entities engaged in humanitarian relief activities in response to the earthquake in Iran.”

The resolution claims that “the magnificent buildings in Bam belonged not only to the people of Iran, but to our common world heritage.”

Additionally, the resolution states that “the United States’ generosity has confirmed that the United States holds no ill will toward the people of Iran. . . . The spirit and compassionate conduct of the United States has won it tremendous goodwill among the people of Iran.”

Additional Background: According to the resolution, about 40,000 people, including one American citizen, perished in the Bam earthquake. Ninety percent of the 2000-year-old city of Bam was destroyed. The Iranian Government accepted humanitarian assistance from every country that offered it, except Israel.

To view photos of the aftermath of the earthquake, visit this webpage:
http://www.iiees.ac.ir/bam_pic1.html

Committee Action: On February 25, 2004 the International Relations Committee considered the resolution during a markup session. By unanimous consent, the Committee agreed to authorize Chairman Hyde to ask that H.Res. 526 be brought to the House floor under suspension of the rules.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution would authorize no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

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